

# Meeting Summary of the Senate Bill 375 **Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC)**

Wednesday, June 3, 2009  
Ronald Dellums Federal Building  
1303 Clay Street  
Oakland, California 94612

## **Discussion Highlights**

### **MPO Scenario Data**

ARB staff provided an update to the RTAC on the MPO scenario data collection effort. The RTAC discussed the variability in reported data among the regions and asked staff to continue work to help normalize reported values to aid in future regional comparison analyses and to provide more detail.

Following ARB staff's update on the data collection effort, Bob Leiter from the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) presented to the RTAC on how SANDAG envisions addressing SB 375 requirements in their upcoming RTP update process.

### **SB 375 Planning Requirements**

ARB staff provided a brief overview of specific portions of SB 375 as they relate to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and Alternative Planning Strategy (APS).

### **Evaluation Method**

After the presentations, Chairman Mike McKeever invited the RTAC members to spend three or four minutes commenting on what they felt were most important for the committee to discuss. A number of items were identified for further discussion:

- APS vs. SCS
- Role of models vs. menu of policies
- Baseline and consideration of 'credit' for past actions
- Enforcement, compliance and monitoring
- Social issues (equity and affordable housing)
- Economic issues (current v. future market conditions, financial incentives)
- Flexibility to count fleet, fuel and/or land use savings
- Co-benefits
- Difference between 2020 targets and 2035 targets
- Federal interface (reauthorization effort and briefing on federal activities)

Committee discussion at the June 3 meeting covered the following issue areas identified above:

### **APS vs. SCS**

RTAC members discussed whether the targets should be set at a level that allows MPOs to meet the target with an SCS or encourages MPOs to develop an APS in addition. Opinions among Committee members varied, with discussion including statute requirements and consideration of funding, particularly federal funding. It was noted that an MPO must develop an SCS and, if the SCS does not meet the target, an APS as well. Several members agreed that the APS should be used to demonstrate regions' needs for reducing greenhouse gases. Another similarly stated that the targets should be designed to force change. Others felt that RTAC would create a disincentive to succeed by giving MPOs the option of an APS, with one member feeling very strongly that all regions should be able to meet the target with an SCS; otherwise, the target is not achievable. It was noted that the federal government limits how much future revenue MPOs can assume in an RTP, as MPOs must demonstrate funding availability. One member pointed out that the four largest MPOs have created aggressive scenarios that include land use changes and pricing for their planning efforts and these could be considered as APSs.

### **Role of models vs. Menu of policies**

RTAC tended to favor a "blended" approach for target setting that includes a modeling component and a menu of policies component and requested more discussion of what the "blend" would look like. One possible role of the menu of policies would be to assess the model output. Regarding the particular components, several members expressed concern over the quality of the data and models and highlighted the need for consistency across assumptions and methodologies. Another suggested approach attempts to address this with targets for initial planning cycles based on best practices and for later planning cycles based on models, as they improve. Most members favor an uncomplicated, short menu of policies and best practices from which regions can choose. Three complications of a "points for policies" approach were highlighted: oversimplification of complex issues, the difficulty of assigning point values to policies consistently across all regions, and the necessity of models to assign values to a combination of policies or measures

### **Enforcement, compliance and monitoring**

Members stated that RTAC should not encourage a compliance-based approach, but rather use incentives to encourage MPOs to surpass targets. RTAC hopes that if the targets are set at the correct level, residential developers will ask to partner with local governments to maximize CEQA benefits.

### **Next Steps**

RTAC asked if ARB will present at the July meeting a draft framework for a target-setting methodology, a specific definition of "aggressive and achievable", and recommendations for a panel of experts to explore changes in housing density and transit investments.

**Members present:**

Chesley, A.\*

Devereaux, G.

Katz, R.

Parkinson, P.

Wallerstein, B.

Wunderman, J.\*

Cohen, S.

Eaken, A.

Leahy, A.

Parks, L.

Walters, J.

Dickinson, R.

Gallegos, G.

Libicki, S.

Pastor, M.

Whiteside, C.

Doyle, S.

Heminger, S.

McKeever, M.

Rawson, M.

Woo, M.

*\*represented by a colleague*